Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of accessing a network-connected content site comprising the following steps carried out at a network browser :

(a) receiving a sound-sequence signal representing a sound sequence with sound features that encode a character sequence according to a predetermined scheme, the character sequence comprising two groups of characters, one of which is a site code intended to be translated to a content-site URI by a remote service system and the other of which comprises the address of the service system serves to indicate that the said one group is a said site code;

(b) decoding the received sound-sequence signal to derive a said character sequence;

(c) detecting said two groups of characters in the character sequence with detection of said other group being taken as indicating that the site code formed by said one group is to be sent to the service system for translation; and

(d) sending the site code to the service system at its address indicated by said other group of characters, receiving back the corresponding content-site URI, and using it to access the content site.

2-4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) A method according to claim 4 1, wherein the said other group of characters comprises the URI of the service system.

6. (original) A method according to claim 5, wherein the URI of the service system is a URL

7. (currently amended) A method according to claim 4̶8̶, wherein the nature of the sound features and of the predetermined encoding scheme is such that a sound sequence of a musical character represents said one group of characters.

8. (currently amended) A method according to claim4̶1̶, wherein the nature of the sound features and of the predetermined encoding scheme is such that a sound sequence of a musical character represents said other group of characters.

9. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein in step (b) said sound features are decoded into corresponding sound codewords which are then mapped to characters.

10. (original) A method according to claim 9, wherein the sound features comprise one of:
- fixed-frequency tones or tone combinations;
- occurrence of maximum sound output power in predetermined frequency bands;
- changes in output frequency;
- different modulation frequencies of one or more tones.

11. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the steps of the method are carried out by a voice browser.

12. (original) A method according to claim 1, including the further step of caching the correspondence of site code to site URI, step (c) involving checking this cache before contacting the service system.

13. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the content site URI is a URL.

14. (currently amended) Browser apparatus for accessing network-connected content sites, the apparatus comprising:

first means an input arrangement for receiving a sound-sequence signal representing a sound sequence with sound features that encode a character

sequence according to a predetermined scheme, the character sequence comprising two groups of characters one of which is a site code intended to be translated to a content site URI by a service system and the other of which comprises the address of the service system ~~serves to indicate that the said one group is a said site code~~;

a decoder ~~second means~~ for decoding the received sound-sequence signal to derive a character sequence;

a detection arrangement for ~~third means operative to~~ detecting said two groups of characters in the character sequence with detection of said other group being taken as indicating that the site code formed by said one group is to be sent to the remote service system for translation; .

a service-system accessing arrangement ~~fourth means~~ for sending the site code to the service system at its address indicated by said other group of characters and receiving back the corresponding content site URI; and

a content-site accessing arrangement for ~~fifth means operative to use~~ using the content-site URI received from the service system to access the content site.

15-17. (canceled)

18. (currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 14~~17~~, wherein the said other group of characters comprises the URI of the service system~~, the third means being operative to take this URI and use it to contact the service system~~.

19. (original) Apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the URI of the service system is a URL.

)

20-21. (canceled)

22. (currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the ~~second means~~ decoder comprises a first decoding arrangement ~~means~~ for decoding said sound

features into corresponding sound codewords and a second decoding arrangement means for mapping these codewords to characters.

23. (currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the first decoding arrangement is adapted to recognize sound features comprisinge one of:
-     fixed-frequency tones or tone combinations;
-     occurrence of maximum sound output power in predetermined frequency bands;
-     changes in output frequency;
-     different modulation frequencies of one or more tones.

24. (original) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the apparatus is a voice browser.

25. (original) Apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising a cache for caching previously-determined correspondences between site codes and site URIs, the third means being operative, in response to the presence of a site code in the received sound sequence, to check the cache and only send the site code to the service system where the cache does not hold a site-code to URI correspondence for that site code.

26. (original) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the content site URI is a URL.

27. (original) Apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising a microphone for receiving the sound sequence and providing a corresponding said sound-sequence signal to said means for receiving.

28. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the steps of the method are carried out by end-user equipment.

29. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the service system is connected to the internet and step (d) involves communicating with the service system over the internet.

30. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising the initial step of receiving said sound sequence and converting it into said sound sequence signal.

31. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the apparatus is end-user equipment (10).

32. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the service system is connected to the internet, the fourth means comprising means for communicating with the service system over the internet.

33. (currently amended) End-user equipment ~~for accessing content sites, the apparatus~~comprising:

> a decoding arrangement <u>for</u> ~~operative to~~ receiv<u>ing</u> and decod<u>ing</u> a sound-sequence signal representing a sound sequence with sound features that encode a character sequence comprising ~~two groups of characters, one of which is~~a site code<u> and a service-system address </u>~~intended to be translated to a content-site URI by a remote service system and the other of which serves to indicate that the said one group is a said site code~~;
>
> a content-URI access arrangement <u>for</u> ~~operative to~~ detect<u>ing</u> said <u>site code and service-system address</u> ~~two groups of characters~~ in a said character sequence decoded by the decoding arrangement from a received said sound-sequence signal, ~~the content-URI access arrangement being responsive to detection of said other group of characters to~~ <u>for</u> send<u>ing</u> the site code <u>to a </u>~~formed by said one group of characters to the remote~~ service system <u>at said service-system address,</u> and <u>for</u> ~~to~~ receiv<u>ing</u> back <u>a </u>~~the corresponding~~ content-site URI, and
>
> a content retrieval arrangement <u>for</u> ~~operative to~~ us<u>ing</u> the content-site URI ~~received from the service system~~to access <u>a</u>~~the~~ content site.

34. (currently amended) Equipment according to claim 33, wherein the <u>service-system</u> <u>address is in the form of an URI</u>.~~said other group of characters comprises the URI of the~~ ~~service system, the content-URI access arrangement being operative to take this URI~~ ~~and use it to contact the service system.~~

35. (Previously presented) Equipment according to claim 33, wherein the service system is connected to the internet, the content-URI access arrangement comprising means for communicating with the service system over the internet.

36. (Previously presented) Equipment according to claim 33, further comprising a microphone for receiving the sound sequence and providing a corresponding said sound-sequence signal to said decoding arrangement.

37-39 (canceled)

40. (new) A method of accessing a network-connected content site ~~comprising~~<u>with</u> a network browser<u>, said method comprising</u>:

receiving a sound-sequence signal representing a sound sequence with sound features that encode a character sequence according to a predetermined scheme, the character sequence comprising a service-system address and a site code indicative of said content site;

decoding the received sound-sequence signal to derive said character sequence;

detecting the site code and service-system address in said character sequence;

sending the site code to a service system at said service-system address; and

receiving back from the service system a content-site URI corresponding to said site code, and

using the received content-site URI to access said content site.

41. (new) A method according to claim 40, wherein the service-system address is in the form of an URI.

42. (new) A method according to claim 40, wherein the nature of the sound features and of the predetermined encoding scheme is such that a sound sequence of a musical character represents said service-system address.

43. (new) A method according to claim 41, wherein the nature of the sound features and of the predetermined encoding scheme is such that a sound sequence of a musical character represents said site code.